

Profile

a guide to military careers



Basic Training

Dear Readers:

When discussing story ideas for the 1988-89 year, our goal was to write stories that hadn't been covered in the past. We feel we've done this by adding some space- and satellite-related articles, in addition to some officer career fields.

In this issue, we are providing information about the five services' basic training. The purpose of these stories is to let you know what to expect during training, and to eliminate any myths and misconceptions you may have. In some ways, the training is the same in all services; this includes the fact that, with the exception of offensive combat skills, women must do everything the men do. In other cases, of course, it varies. For example, the Marines and Army emphasize combat-related skills, whereas the Navy and Coast Guard are seamanship oriented.

All services stress TEAMWORK in training, on the job, and, ultimately, between the services. That's the only way the military's mission—defense of the United States and her allies—will ever be successfully accomplished.

In the coming publishing year, we'll be conducting a survey to find out what you like about our magazine and how you think we can improve it. As always, we appreciate your comments and suggestions about how we can make the magazine and its contents more relevant to you and your career goals.

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Front: Navy recruits come to basic training from every state in the nation. As part of graduation ceremonies eight weeks later, the recruit 50-State Flag Team salutes each state. (Photo by PA1 Rick Woods)

Back: Part of Air Force basic training's obstacle course includes the 13-foot high barrel pyramid. (Photo by SSgt. Linda Mitchell)

'What kind of training?' **'ARMY training, sir!'**

Story and photos
by SFC Karen Polston

The bus pulled up in front of the reception station at Fort Jackson, S.C. They filed off the bus quietly, not knowing what to expect. They were greeted by a huge sign and an even bigger drill sergeant, welcoming them to the U.S. Army. They had begun basic training.

The next three days were a blur of filling out paperwork, enduring hair cuts, going through medical

exams, receiving immunizations, and getting their initial issue of uniforms. They learned how to stand at attention and the fundamentals of marching.

During their reception station stay, trainees also go through the "Amnesty Room." The drill sergeants explain that if they have any contraband items, such as weapons, drugs, food, or flammable materials, they can be dropped through a slot in the Amnesty Room and there are no questions

asked. However, if the trainee is caught later with any of these items, they will be disciplined.

"Generally we see a lot of weapons," explained Capt. John Bednar, the station's executive officer. "Mostly knives. However occasionally we get 'Rambo' coming through here loaded for bear. We had one trainee come in with six firearms. All the contraband turned over or confiscated is released to the military police for disposal.



A trainee sticks it to a target during the bayonet assault course.

On the first day, all tobacco products will be confiscated.

"Another item that we are confiscating now is any tobacco item, such as chewing tobacco, snuff, cigars and cigarettes. During basic training, the new soldiers are not allowed to use these products," Bednar said.

"There was a study done that showed many soldiers began smoking during basic training. It used to be when trainees got a break, they were told, 'smoke 'em if you got 'em.' We're attempting to break that pattern. Plus, if the trainees don't smoke, they are in better physical condition and don't get sick as often."

Along with the initial processing during the first three days, trainees are tested to see how many push-ups they can do. The requirements are 13 push-ups for men and one pushup for women. If the new soldier can't meet the requirements, they are sent to the Fitness Training Company, where drill sergeants help the trainee get into shape for basic training.

After the initial processing is completed and uniforms have been issued, the trainees are assigned to companies and transferred to the barracks that will be "home" for the next eight weeks.

In addition to Fort Jackson, basic training is conducted at seven other Army posts around the country. These are: Fort Dix, N.J.; Fort McClellan, Ala.; Fort Benning, Ga.; Fort Knox, Ky.; Fort Leonard Wood, Mo.; Fort Bliss, Texas; and Fort Sill, Okla.

Basic training is separated into three sections – the red, white, and blue phases.

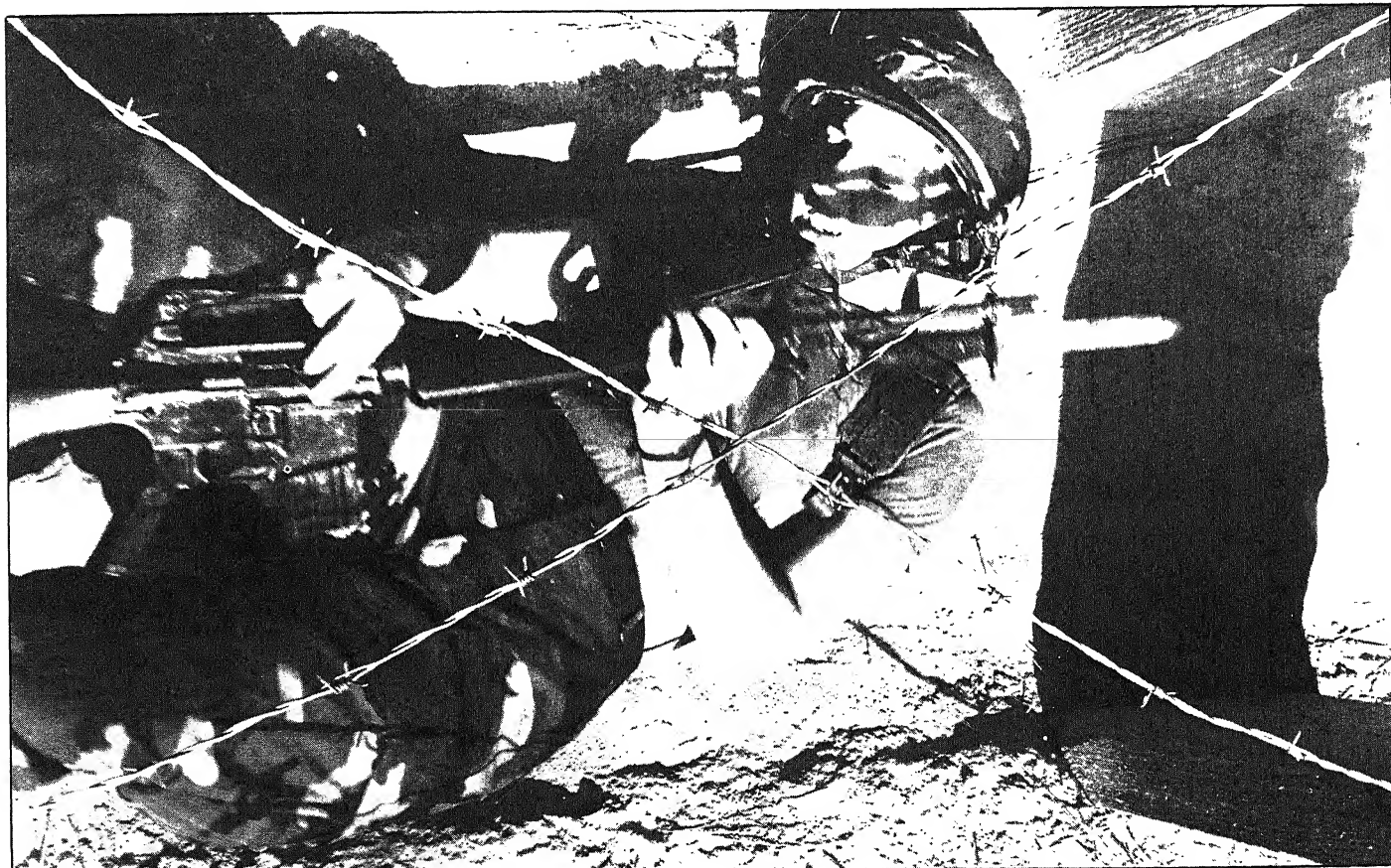
During the red phase, trainees are indoctrinated in basic soldiering skills. These include first aid



Men must be able to perform 13 push-ups before they begin basic training.

procedures, running the "Fit To Win" obstacle course, going through the gas chamber to prac-

tice using their gas masks, hand-to-hand combat maneuvers, and rappelling.



A trainee works her way through battlefield-style obstacles.



The first haircut is a dreaded occurrence for many.



A trainee slips into his "combat boots."

While the trainees are going through the 14-day red phase, their drill sergeants are with them from wake-up until lights out. "There's a lot to learn in a short amount of time," explained Staff Sgt. Sun Hee Nam, a drill sergeant. "During the red phase, we emphasize the buddy system. If we can get our trainees to begin working as a team, basic training will go much smoother for them."

Teamwork helps make basic training run smoother.

The white phase is Basic Rifle Marksmanship (BRM). During this

phase, the trainees find a new best friend – their M-16A1 rifle. "The most important thing we teach here on the range is safety," Nam explained. "From the very first second the trainees are assigned a rifle, they're drilled with weapons safety techniques."

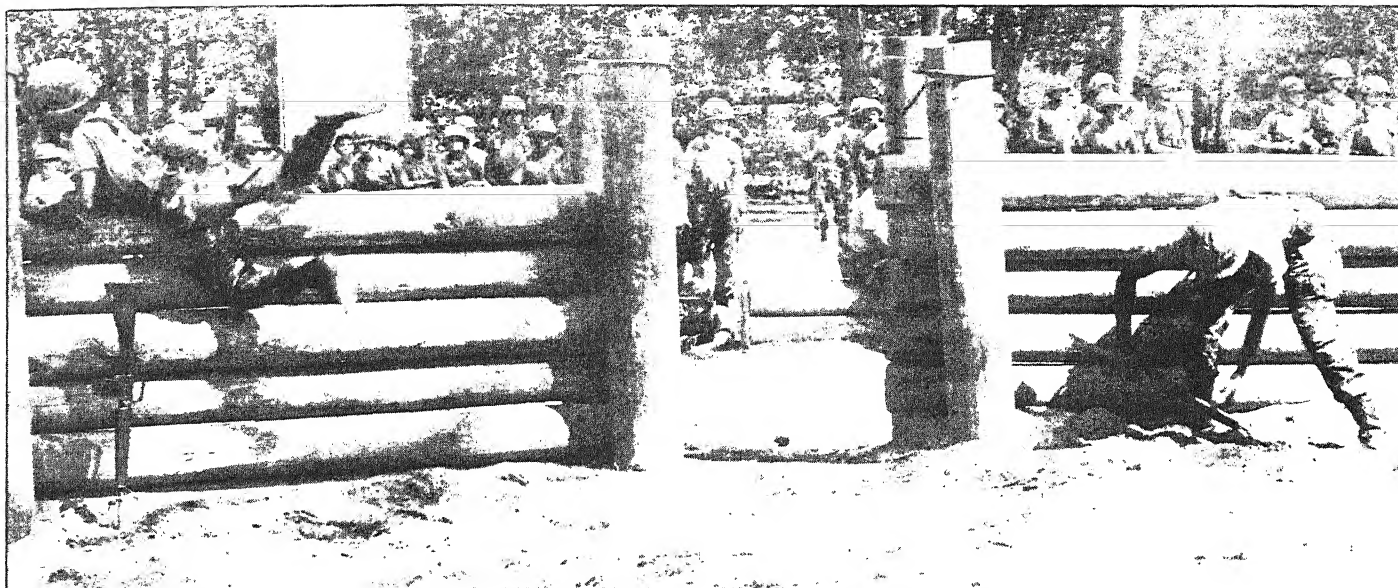
"The trainees learn how to break the weapon down, clean it and reassemble it so it will function properly. They learn what steps to follow if the weapon malfunctions while they are firing and proper range and firing behavior. When we begin firing at the targets, we're using live ammunition. We can't have anyone acting irresponsibly with a loaded weapon. Therefore, discipline on the range is very strict."

The new soldiers learn how to fire their weapons from various

positions – prone, sitting, standing and in a foxhole. They "zero" their

The field exercise is similar to "an intensive camping trip."

weapons (adjust the sights so they can hit the target) and then practice qualifying with the weapons. To qualify, the trainees have to score by hitting the target with a specified number of rounds. After seven days of intensive training with the rifles, the trainees actually qualify and earn their marksmanship award. The final section of basic train-



The "Fit to Win" obstacle course tests a recruit's physical fitness.

ing is the blue phase – combat indoctrination. Here, the trainees learn individual and buddy battle techniques, putting together all the skills they have learned during the first two phases.

During the blue phase, trainees learn to throw hand grenades, have a night firing session on the range using tracer ammunition so they can see where their rounds are hitting and receive training on the M-60 machine gun, Nam said.

"They also spend time on a field maneuver, living in tents, pulling guard duty, using field sanitation techniques and practicing their soldiering skills," Nam said.

After the blue phase is completed, comes the day all basic trainees anxiously await – graduation. Looking sharp in their dress green uniforms with shoes shined, the trainees march across the parade field in formation. As friends and families look on, these trainees become soldiers, ready to go on to train in their occupational speciality.

"Graduation always gets to me," Nam said. "The pride on their faces is unbelievable. Graduation day is the best part of my job, because I see people who eight weeks ago didn't know their left from their right, become functioning members of the U.S. Army. Turning civilians into soldiers is what basic training is all about. I love being a part of it." ▢



Recruits receive intensive training with many combat weapons.



Above: During Basic Warrior Training, the recruits learn how to survive in a battlefield environment. Below: Drill instructors are responsible for turning recruits into Marines in 11 weeks.

‘Ooh-rah!’

It takes motivation to handle some of the toughest recruit training the U.S. military has to offer.

Story and photos
by Spec. Paul White

You want to ask your teacher a question, so you raise your hand.

Once acknowledged, you assume your best upright posture, look straight ahead and in your most reverential tone, say, “Sir, I request permission to speak.”



The teacher may express surprise at your sudden, unprovoked display of respect. Fellow students might figure you’re trying to kiss up to your instructor. But it’s hard to imagine this approach getting you into any trouble.

In Marine Corps basic training, this kind of language simply isn’t tolerated.

Marine Corps

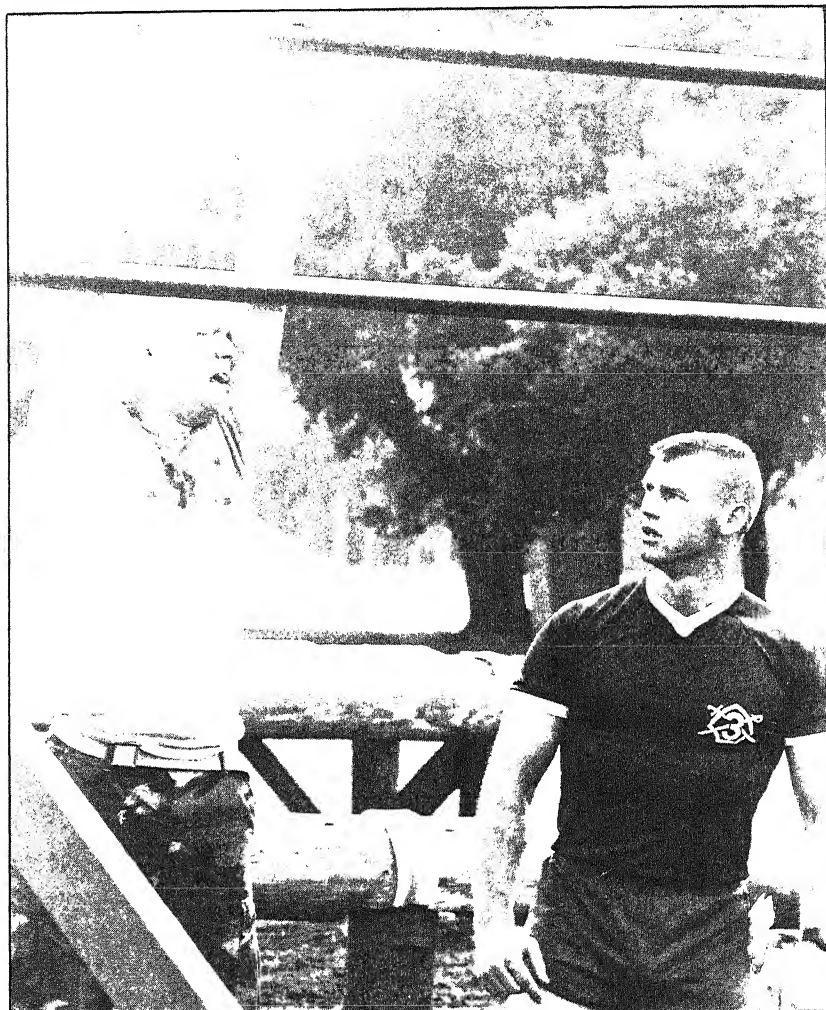
“I had a hard time learning to speak in the third person all the time,” said Private 1st Class (PFC) Luis C. Barbosa with a laugh.

“You weren’t allowed to use ‘I’ or ‘me.’ When I had something to say, I had to say, ‘Sir, Private Barbosa requests permission to speak to Senior Drill Instructor Staff Sergeant Nance.’

“I’d slip up sometimes and say ‘sir, I request permission . . .’”



Above: Women recruits must get down and dirty just like the men. Below left: A recruit struggles to complete an obstacle course drill. Below right: Recruits get a chance to rappel from a 45-foot tower.



Barbosa continued. "And he'd say 'I? Private I, huh? How many cases have you solved?'"

Barbosa can laugh about instances like these now. During his recently-completed 11-week stint in Marine Corps basic training, however, the chuckles didn't come as easily. Barbosa was a rarity among Marine recruits: he had a four-year college degree. But his reason for joining the Corps was the same as many. "I wanted to be part of the best," he said.

The Marine Corps prides itself on its reputation as one of the world's most elite combat forces, warriors capable of fighting (and winning) anywhere in the world. The intensity of Marine Corps basic training helps ensure that new Marines will be prepared to meet the force's lofty standards.

Few enter the Corps expecting anything less than a demanding physical regimen. What most learn, however, is that the mental adjustments necessary can some-

times be just as demanding. Take the first day. Overnight, food becomes chow, beds turn into racks and friends and family are miles away. "Ooh-rah," the gung-ho Marine Corps motivational phrase, becomes part of your vocabulary. But you're not a Marine yet, just a recruit. You'll have to earn the title "Marine" in the next 11 weeks.

"It's a culture shock," said one former recruit. "One day you're home with your friends, and the

next day you're in a uniform with your head shaved standing in a platoon with 60 people you don't know."

With different attitudes and from different places, the desire to become Marines is about the only common thread among the recruits initially. They'll have much more in common soon. "From the first day you're there, the drill instructors start working on you about teamwork," Barbosa said. "Everything is done as a team, from making your rack to going to eat to cleaning up. One person sweeps, the next one mops, another one buffs. . . soon, everything begins to flow, one right after the next.

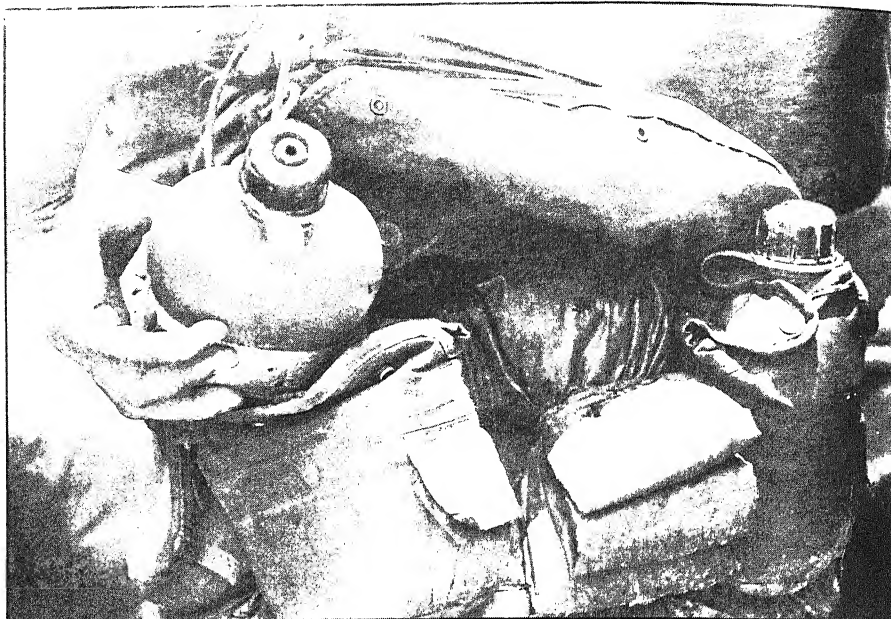
"Even the little things require teamwork. Say your company is being punished by having to run, and one person decides he wants to get it over with by racing ahead of the pack. That's not being a team. You'll all wind up running again."

Another mental adjustment comes once a recruit separates reality from the myths about Marine Corps boot camp. No, Marines aren't blockheads. Ninety-six percent have at least a high school diploma, second only to the Air Force. And no, there's no woodshed where wayward recruits get the discipline beat into them. "We still get privates coming in here who for some reason think they're going to get beat up," said Staff Sgt. Rudy Hernandez, a drill instructor, adding that not only is it illegal, it's also ineffective.

But yes, the Marines are into physical fitness. "I'd say we averaged about two and a half hours of PT (physical training) a day," Barbosa said. The Sacramento, Calif., native said he lost 15 pounds in seven weeks.

The physical training comes in a variety of forms, from obstacle courses and weight training to chin-ups, sit-ups, push-ups and running. And then there's "humping," Marinespeak for climbing the many hills at the Marine Corps Recruit Depot in San Diego. "There were times I didn't think I was going to make it," said PFC Rodney Phillips.

Phillips usually did make it, however, because the alternative, a



Whether it's getting a drink . . .



. . . or getting some rest, recruits must make adjustments when living in the field.

trip to the "pit," was hardly appetizing. "The pit is where they send you for extra PT when you screw up," Barbosa explained. "It didn't matter where you were, because it seemed like they had a pit everywhere."

Barbosa's most memorable pit experience occurred during marksmanship training. "The pit they had there was made of powdered dirt, maybe two inches thick," he said. "They had us doing push-ups, and all of a sudden they said, 'Okay, now blow!' We blew, so then there was dirt flying all over the place.

"There we were in this pit, dirt

everywhere and sweating up a storm, and they said 'Now roll.' By the time we got out of there, we were covered with mud."

One of the more popular aspects of boot camp is Basic Warrior Training, a two-week introduction to what the Corps is famous for — combat skills. During BWT, the recruits strap on 70-pound backpacks, grab their rifles and head out to "the field." They sleep in tents and dine on Meals-Ready to Eat (MREs), portable food-in-a-pouch. "They're pretty good, especially when you're really hungry," Barbosa said.

What the recruits particularly

Recruit training—a capsule look

Marine Corps basic training is conducted at the Marine Corps Recruit Depots in San Diego and on Parris Island, S.C. All women recruits are trained on Parris Island. The objectives of basic training, according to Marine Corps officials, are to “indoc-



Pugil sticks are used to simulate hand-to-hand combat with rifles.

trinate Marine recruits in the fundamentals of service life and develop discipline, proficiency in general military subjects, marksmanship, combat survival swimming, physical fitness, and love of Corps and country.”

Each training cycle is broken down into five parts:

Processing and forming - includes administrative processing, physical screening, swim testing (recruits must be able to tread water for 10 minutes), rifle issue and classes on military subjects.

Phase I - an initial strength test, swim training, physical training, classes on general military subjects, (military law and history, first aid, etc.), an inspection, marching training and an overall test are included in this two-week phase.

Phase II - a two-week dose of marksmanship training, culminating with the recruit passing an M-16 qualification test. The test measures the ability to engage 200-, 300- and 500- meter targets from prone, kneeling, sitting and standing positions.

Mess and maintenance - a week during which the recruits perform odd jobs around the installation (i.e. cutting grass) or assist in the dining facilities.

Phase III - includes combat skills training (Basic Warrior Training), three inspections, comprehensive tests in combat skills and marching and the graduation ceremony. Roughly one month long, Phase III is the longest portion of basic training.

Most recruits complete basic training in 56 training days (Sundays, holidays, the processing and forming, and the mess and maintenance phases do not count as training days). Recruits unable to meet minimum physical fitness, swimming, marksmanship or medical (sustaining injury during training) standards are assigned to special units for remedial training.

enjoy is the concentrated weapons training. Tossing live hand grenades, firing grenade and rocket launchers and learning about several other weapons are all a part of BWT. Not so enjoyable are the pesky sandfleas that inhabit the Marine Corps Recruit Depot at Parris Island. The bites of these critters can make a recruit's arm look like a relief map.

The Marines also stress drilling, or marching. “Moving a unit from point A to point B is still the most effective way to instill discipline

and teamwork into the recruits,” Hernandez said. It works, according to Phillips, as by the final drill test each company is striving to out-march each other. “When you're the best, everyone looks up to you,” he said. “That's what our company wanted. Everybody put out 100 percent effort so we could be number one.”

The final drill test means basic training is almost over. It's a time when the adjustments are few, the physical demands more predictable, Barbosa said. “I wouldn't say

it got easy, but you knew how to respond, how to act, and how to do the things that were asked of you.” And then comes graduation day, when the recruits finally become Marines. “The second proudest day of my life, right after graduating from high school,” Phillips said.

“I had told myself I was going to make it no matter what,” Barbosa said. “If you really believe that, you'll be okay. It's the people who give up on themselves that usually don't make it.”

Ooh-rah! ♠

U.S. Air Force

Aiming high



Story and photos by
SSgt. Linda Mitchell

It all seemed so easy.

Mark was interviewed by an Air Force recruiter, who told him what jobs were available. He passed all the written tests and medical exams and signed the paperwork to become a security policeman.

Then the time of reckoning came—BASIC TRAINING—and he had NO idea what to expect!

Now he knows.

Airman Basic Mark Rowell, a native of Stone Mountain, Ga., just entered his final week of training at Lackland Air Force Base, San Antonio, Texas. "From the moment trainees step off the bus until the day they graduate," he warned, "they will be ordered, not requested, to do things; they will be yelled at by the military training instructors (MTIs) for one infraction of the rules or another at least once a day for the next six weeks."

Training begins the moment the new "rainbows" (so-called because of their multi-colored clothing) arrive at Lackland, usually late in the evening. They are greeted by their MTIs, the people charged with reshaping them into productive Air Force members.

The first taste of life as a basic trainee comes when the MTI opens his or her mouth. "When I give the command, you WILL stand and quickly exit this bus! You WILL stand AT ATTENTION and

Locker inspections are a way of life.

A "rainbow" learns to make her bed before she can sleep in it on the first night of basic training.

SILENTLY where I tell you to! From now on, when given an order to move as a group or individually, you WILL answer AT ALL TIMES with MA'AM, YES, MA'AM! DO YOU UNDERSTAND?" the female MTI called out in a forceful voice.

"Ma'am, yes, ma'am."

"I CAN'T HEAR YOU!"

"MA'AM, YES, MA'AM!"

"Everybody off the bus NOW!"

The yelling and ordering have a purpose. They let trainees know who's in charge from the beginning. They also attune recruits to reacting without hesitation or question; such reaction could mean the difference between life and death in a hazardous situation.

Men and women are assigned to separate dormitory areas, called bays, containing up to 50 individuals each. Aside from this, they follow the same schedule along with other brother and sister training groups known as flights.

Any thoughts of sleeping in every morning for the next six weeks vanish the first morning. Training resumes at 5 a.m., when the dreaded wake-up call comes in loud and clear over the intercom loudspeaker in each flight dormitory bay.

Every day begins the same way: Get up, get dressed and be downstairs in formation on the quadrangle by 5:30 a.m. to march to the dining hall for breakfast. After breakfast and dormitory cleanup details, the first morning is devoted to receiving the initial uniform issue of green fatigues, hats, shoes, and related accessories, and the infamous clipper cut for men.

"Women are allowed to have long hair, but it must be above the bottom of the collar when in uniform," said Airman Basic Cassandra Thomas, also in her sixth week of training. The Dublin, Ga., native said that it might be wise to get a haircut before entering train-



Recruits edge their way across the first of four water obstacles.

ing or on the first day because "in the short time they allow us to get dressed, there's no time for showers, much less putting up hair and applying makeup!" Trainees also receive their first pay allowance on the first day.

During the next few days, airmen are introduced to such subjects as how to formally report to officers, fire drills, dormitory and locker arrangements and maintenance, and a briefing on the Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ) which governs all military services. First immunizations and medical and dental processing are

also accomplished at this time. They learn to perform dorm guard duty, maintaining 24-hour-a-day security of the dorm and its occupants in rotating shifts.

Trainees are issued a study guide, which covers everything they will learn in basic training. Subjects include variations of uniforms and how they are worn, more about the UCMJ, customs and courtesies, lifesaving techniques, physical fitness and weight standards which must be met, and many other areas. This guide is used in class, and studied during every spare minute, including



A female trainee takes aim at a target with a Combat Arms instructor to assist her.

study and personal time and while in formation waiting for the order to march.

Day five adds physical training to the schedule. The program consists of exercises such as sit-ups, push-ups, jumping jacks and others, which increase in increments until the final PT test. Men and women must also pass a running fitness test, beginning with half a mile in four minutes, 30 seconds for men and 4:52 for women. The final PT test includes a mile-and-a-half run in 13:30 (men) and 14:36 (women).

Scattered throughout training are information personnel inspections; dormitory and locker inspections; more haircuts, medical and dental exams and shots; and a second clothing issue, when trainees receive their dress blue uniforms. "This is a milestone," Thomas said. "It's like seeing a pinpoint of light at the end of a very long, dark tunnel. They begin to believe that they'll survive this experience."

Marching, of course, is a way of life in basic training. Rowell said, "In six weeks, flights will march more than a hundred miles. They march almost everywhere, the ex-

ceptions being the Combat Arms marksmanship range and the confidence course, which are a few miles off the training base."

Men and women receive M-16 rifle marksmanship training. Classroom work includes correct procedures for clearing ammunition in the rifle chamber and magazine; tearing down, cleaning and reassembling the rifle; how to make sight adjustments; and the strict safety precautions to follow when on the marksmanship range. On the range, Combat Arms instructors demonstrate the correct way to load the cartridge magazine and assist the trainees in firing the weapon from the standing, kneeling, sitting and prone positions.

The confidence course is completed about half way through training. This 18-station, 9/10ths-of-a-mile-long obstacle course is designed to do what its name implies—instill confidence in those who complete it. Four of the obstacles are over water up to four and a half feet deep. Other obstacles are the 13-foot barrel pyramid, a minefield (sound affects only, no live ammunition!) and the

first and second cliffs. Trainees must climb down the hanging rope of the 17-foot first cliff, then climb up the rope of the 20-foot second cliff.

Of course, all work and no rest time would have negative effects on the attitudes of even the hardest trainees. The time slots set aside for mail call, study and personal time quickly become highlights of each day. "Privileges are earned by performing all the hard work well," Rowell explained.

"During the first couple of weeks, trainees earn patio breaks, which are short periods of time when they can write letters or just sit and enjoy a soda on the quadrangle patio. The time lengthens as the weeks pass and the flights continue to perform satisfactorily."

"Base liberty" are magic words which begin appearing around the end of the third week. "Base liberty is a few hours during which trainees can leave the training side of Lackland and cross over to the permanent party side," Thomas said. "After being confined to the recruit side for three weeks, it's a relief to enter the 'real world' again!"

If the dress blues issue is a tiny spark, Town Pass is a bright beacon at the end of the tunnel signifying that life as a recruit is almost over.

Many choose to take in the sights of San Antonio, including the Alamo and River Walk, while others travel to one of the local malls or other local attractions.

Then comes THE day—GRADUATION DAY! Parents and friends are welcome to come spend the Town Pass and graduation days with their recruits.

"It was a long, tough six weeks, and I won't believe it's over until I'm on the bus to the airport," Rowell said, "but just thinking about the graduation parade makes it more believable. It was a valuable learning experience, one which will make future experiences easier to cope with by comparison. But I'm sure glad now that I'm looking back on the experience and KNOWING what to expect, rather than looking forward to it!"



Trainees visit the Alamo on Town Pass in San Antonio.

What to bring:

Bring one or two changes of clothing, particularly if arriving on a weekend, and enough personal underclothing to last about a week. (Must be white for men, white or skin tone for women.)

Wear a comfortable, sturdy pair of jogging shoes, and pack shower shoes.

Women can bring one pair of plain (no stitching or decorations) black pumps.

Bring personal articles like toothpaste, toothbrush, soap, shaving cream and razors. Women can bring makeup and facial creams. However, keep in mind that there won't be much time for applying makeup during the first few weeks, and everything in the locker, including messy jars, is inspected!

If their hair is longer than the bottom of a shirt collar, women must also bring plain barrettes, rubber bands and bobby pins which closely match their natural hair color. Hair can be dyed, but it must look natural; purple is not in fashion in the Air Force! All other forms of hair decoration, such as head bands and ribbons are not authorized while in uniform.

Women can wear a short hairstyle, but it must look feminine and well-cut and

-groomed.

Contact lenses are allowed, but there will be little time during the day for taking care of them, and, except in medical emergencies, they might not be replaced during training if lost.

Eyeglasses must have neutral-colored frames.

Bring no more than about \$50. This is enough for incidentals while traveling to Lackland, and to make it until the first pay day, which is usually the first day of training. You won't have to pay for travel fare or in-transit meals.

Bibles and other religious books are allowed.

Women can wear one pair of gold, pearl or silver ball-shaped earrings and healing posts. Men and women are allowed to wear watches and no more than three rings. It's recommended, however, that with the exception of a watch and wedding rings, all other jewelry be left at home for security and safety reasons.

Other things to leave at home:

Sports equipment. (Lackland is not a resort!)

Extra clothes and personal items.

Bring only what you can pack in one small bag; keep in mind that you will have to carry it yourself!

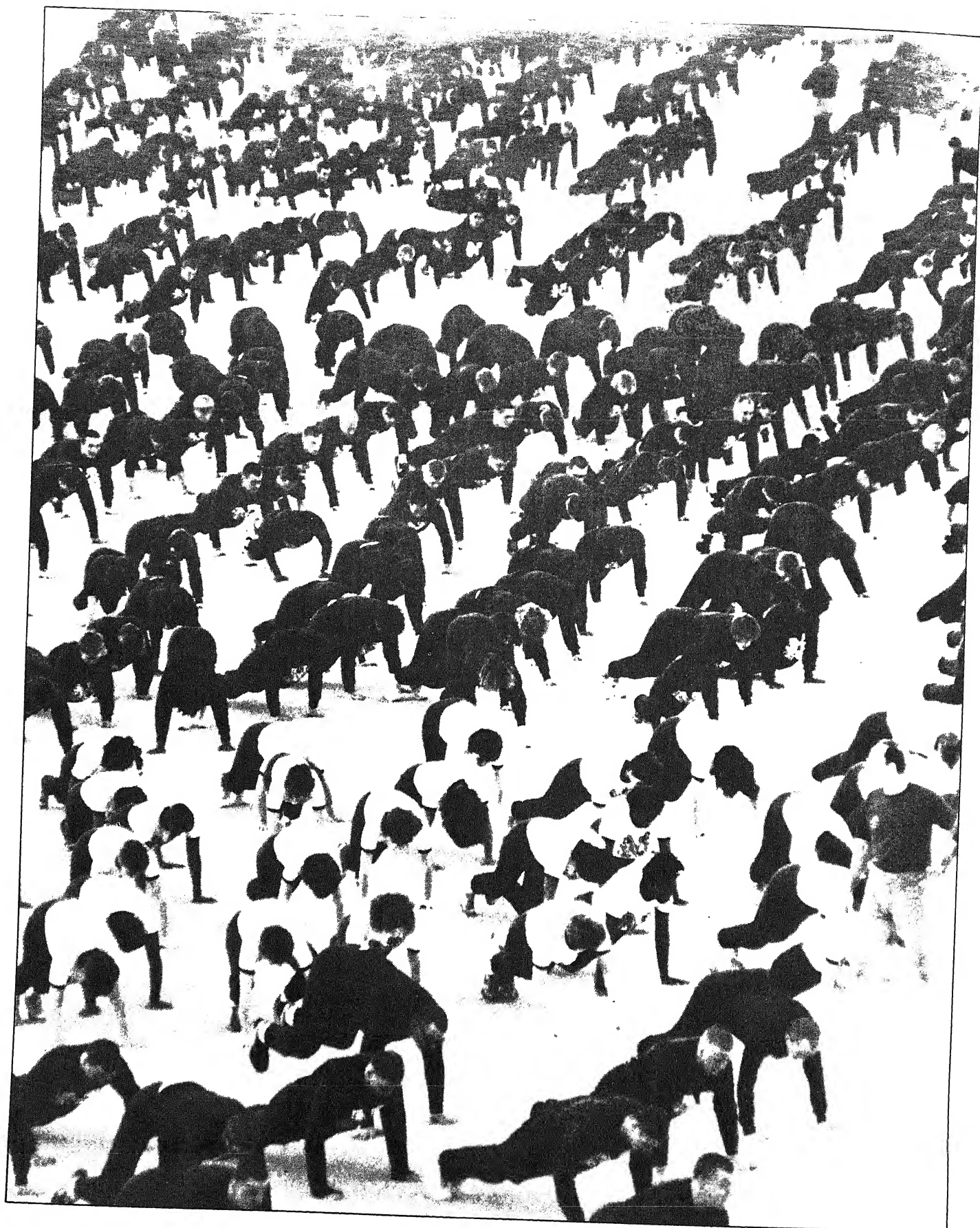
Radios, books, magazines, decks of cards, and all other forms of entertainment.

Family pictures, except those carried in a wallet.

Cars. You won't be allowed to ride in or drive any vehicles, unless they're specifically authorized, such as a government bus or ambulance, until you go on base liberty and Town Pass. Then, you can hire a commercial shuttle taxi, so ask mom and dad to babysit your pride and joy for six weeks.

Phone numbers of local relatives and friends. While this would be nice for a home-cooked meal after graduation, you won't be allowed to make or accept phone calls except in emergencies during training.

Parents, spouses and significant others may worry about your diet during training, but they must refrain from sending food "care" packages. Storage and consumption of food in the dormitory are not authorized, and it would be a shame to throw away the home-made cookies that mom baked! ☘



Push-ups are just one of the many strenuous exercises recruits must perform.

Before the adventure begins...

Story and photos
by PA1 Rick Woods

Complete control of eight weeks of Navy recruits' lives begins the minute they arrive at the U.S. Navy Recruit Training Command at Orlando, Fla., the only Navy recruit training facility for women, one of three for men.

A Navy chief petty officer meets each busload of recruits and tells them to hustle out and stand in ranks. They're uneasy and unsure about learning to take their first military orders. "Attennnnn-SHUNNNN!!!!" he shouts, and curtly describes how to "stand at attention." The new recruits jerk into the positions. A few mumble "Yes, sir. . ."

"The second thing you'll be required to do is start and end everything you say to anyone here but another recruit with the word SIR, is that clear?"

"Sir, yes sir."

"LOUDER!!!"

"SIR, YES SIR!!!"

The recruits are then led into the Recruit In-Processing Facility (RIF), the first contact point for new recruits as they arrive. Still reeling from the chief's no-nonsense introduction, they listen intently as Commander J.A. Pomberg, executive officer of the Recruit Training Command, explains what the next eight weeks will bring.

"As you individually make the transition from being a civilian to a productive, trainable Navy person and adopt the Navy lifestyle, remember that we don't claim or try to give anybody a skill or trade during recruit training," Pomberg tells them. "Here you'll learn military courtesy, a little bit of Navy administration, Navy his-

tory and how to wear your uniform. You learn how to conduct yourself. You can concentrate on skill training at your next command."

The number of recruits at the RIF barracks grows until the average number of 80 to 84 recruits for each company is reached, usually within three days. Each recruit is given everything they'll need, including the initial uniform issue and a "ditty bag" containing grooming items such as soap and toothpaste. Recruits don't need money. Coupons given them for haircuts and personal items are the only currency accepted for the first three weeks. They'll pay for those coupons out of their first paycheck.

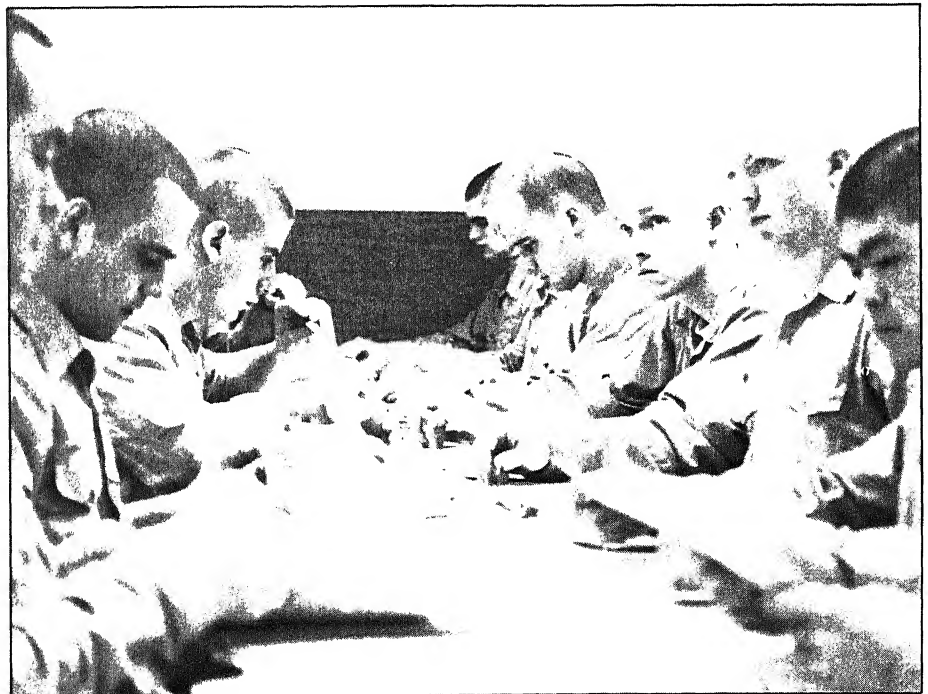
A male recruit's first haircut (the first of four administered during training) will leave him with but a

stubble of hair. Women will wear their hair no longer than collar length. For recruits this is the first step toward letting go of individuality, to mold together into the company of recruits that will eat, sleep, work and learn together for the next eight weeks.

Recruits send their families postcards to let them know they've arrived. The only contact a recruit will have with the outside world for the first few weeks, except in a bonafide emergency, is mail. Telephone privileges are earned later in training.

Each recruit undergoes hours of medical checks and tests, including full x-rays, blood tests, a urinalysis and dental exams. People who will attend nuclear, submarine and dive schools are given special physical exams. All recruits receive a series of im-

Filling out forms starts early in boot camp.



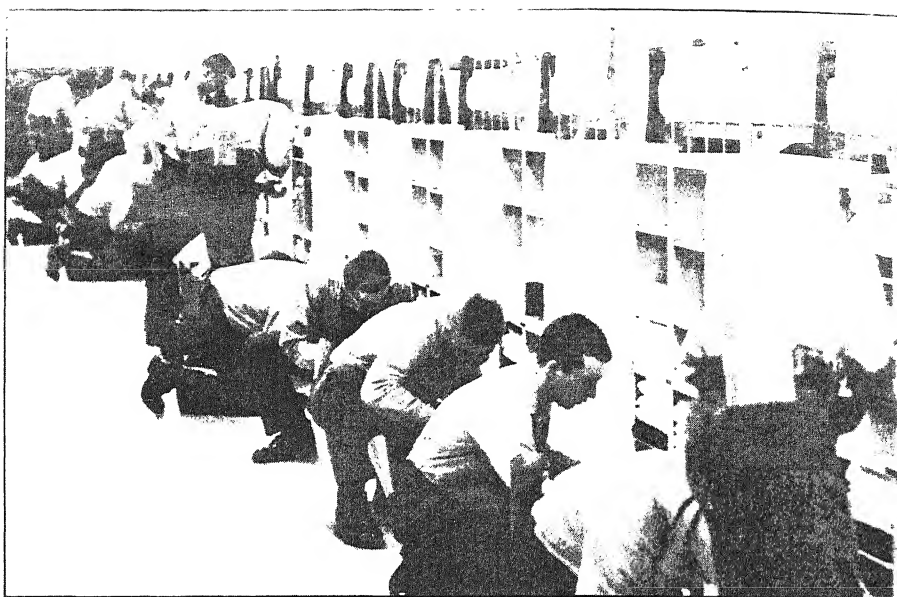
munizations during training.

Those people with medical, administrative or questionable legal conditions are eliminated from the company, and processed for discharge or medical evaluation. All other recruits are ready to begin the next phase of basic training.

They meet their Company Commander (CC), the person who will be disciplinarian and mentor, in charge of their lives for the next eight weeks. The CC will be with the recruits, uniform spotless and shoes shined, from the time they get up in the morning at 4:30 a.m. until the lights are turned out at 10:30 p.m.

The CC introduces the company to the sparse plain bunks and gray metal lockers in one large barracks room. "This is your home for the next eight weeks, this is your area," the recruits are told. "Take care of every square inch of it!"

New terms, phrases and concepts are introduced every day. The



Barracks living is as orderly and predictable as morning reveille.

recruit carries a personal folder with all current information he or she is responsible for knowing and understanding.

A major part of recruit training is taken up by academic studies in classes that cover uniforms, customs and courtesies, naval history, human goals, personal hygiene, first aid and other topics.

While academic subjects expand their awareness and understanding, physical fitness conditioning stretches aching muscles. The first evaluation of individual body strength means doing as many push-ups and sit-ups as possible and doing a one-mile run for a best time. By the end of training most recruits will substantially increase the number of exercises they can do and the distance they can run. There will be three progress tests and daily periods of physical fitness conditioning.

Not all recruits know how to swim when reporting for training. All will learn. Navy recruits must jump off a five-foot platform, stay afloat for five minutes, and swim the length of a one-hundred-foot pool to pass the third class swim test. Those who fail will be taught to swim during up to three weeks of remedial swimming.

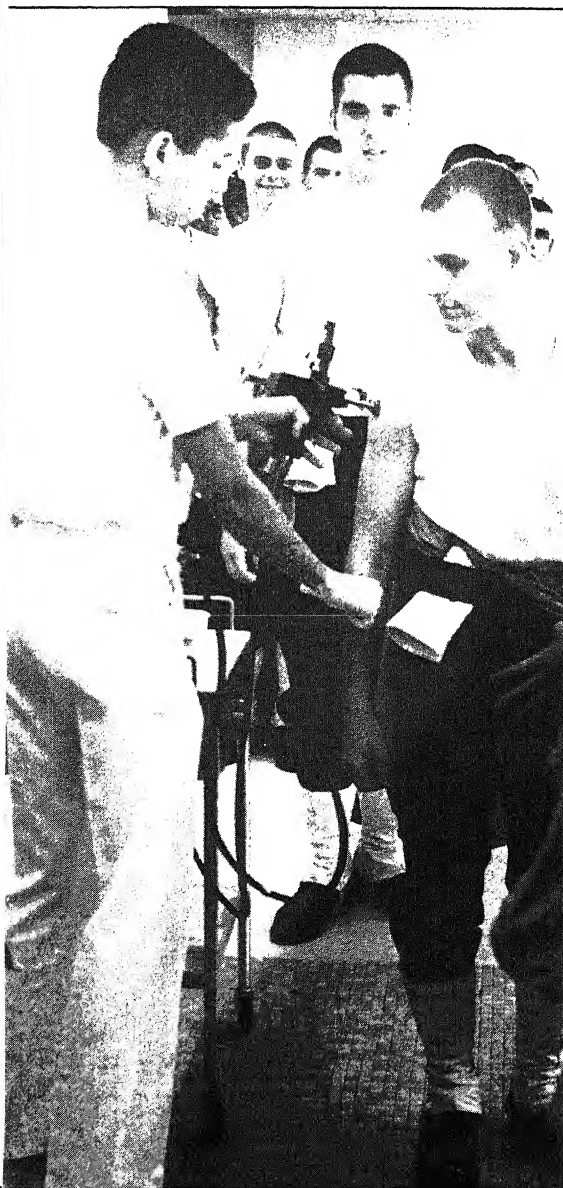
Most parts of basic training, like swimming, are mandatory. Ironically, one of the few choices a recruit gets to make during basic training deals with what comes after basic training. They have the chance to request a future job classification in the first weeks.

Petty Officer 1st Class Terrence Halligan, enlisted classifier, Recruit Training Center Orlando said, "In classification, we recommend individuals for class 'A' school (technical training for a specific trade or job) based on the needs of the Navy, and the recruits' desires, test scores, physical and mental abilities."

Recruits who aren't selected for 'A' schools go to seaman (shipboard maintenance), airman (aviation ground crew), or fireman (engineering maintenance) apprenticeship training, he added.

Recruits learn a little about their 'real-world' fleet obligations during "Fleet Duties and Routines Week," when they work in service jobs at the command. They team up to work as food handlers or to help maintain buildings and grounds.

Teamwork is always a part of basic training, but never more than in shipboard damage control



Immunizations are one of the dreaded aspects of basic training.

and the firefighting school. Teams of recruits line up before the steel-framed door of the mock-up of a ship compartment holding firehoses charged with water at 90 pounds pressure. Inside, the chambers are black with soot, and filled with rolling smoke from rumbling orange flames licking the walls.

"Got a hot one!" yells the instructor.

"Water ON!"... Hose team IN..." calls the fire team leader. "GO! GO! GO! GO!" he urges the fire nozzle handlers as he guides them in the first door behind a fog of water. Rolling black smoke turns to white steam. The chamber is suddenly darker as the team beats back the flames.

Navy recruits learn about a different kind of fire in weapons training. Recruits learn to safely handle a .45 caliber pistol. They also learn range safety while firing thirty pistol rounds with a minimum 80 percent accuracy at a silhouette target.

The work and hours seem endless and the pressure never seems to let up in the first few weeks. A major turning point, however, comes when the recruits are issued their custom-tailored midnight

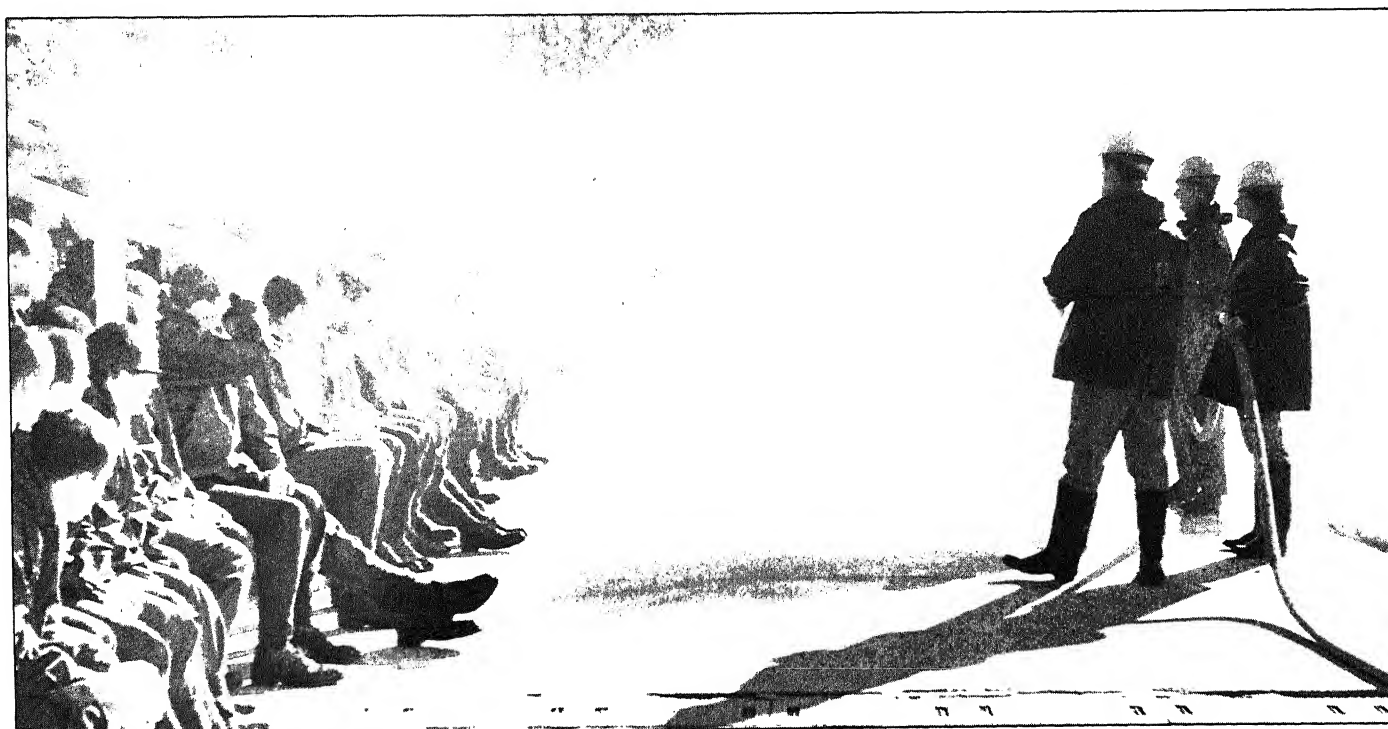
blue and dazzling white dress uniforms, according to Chief Petty Officer Burton, a company commander. "They start to feel that 'Now I'm really in the Navy' when they put that dress uniform on. They start to see the light at the end of the tunnel."

The light grows brighter in the weeks ahead. Each company, *en masse* and in uniform, gets a chance to visit one of the local attractions such as Sea World or Disneyworld during "controlled liberty." On sports weekend, teams of recruits compete in many events, including track and field and swimming. Recruits who excel in various military activities are rewarded with chances to shop in the exchange, to have portraits taken, or to make calls from the telephone center.

Still, learning to live the Navy way is the point. So while the extra privileges are welcome, there's nothing like the feeling of graduation day. "I joined the Navy to better myself, to learn some responsibility and to do something new," said Airman Apprentice Stephen T. Love shortly after his graduation. "Basic training was everything I expected." ◻



A sharp locker arrangement takes attention to detail and neatness.



One week of intense firefighting training teaches men and women to fight real fires.

Coast Guard Basics

Story and photos
by PA1 Rick Woods

"All RIGHT! From here on out you keep your eyes and ears open and your mouth SHUT! When you are spoken to, the first and last words out of your mouth will be SIR! You get off this bus, and you line up on those yellow squares! You had 20 seconds--10 seconds are gone! NOW MOVE IT!!!"

For new recruits, this message in a loud, blunt, southern drawl is their introduction to Coast Guard basic training and Chief Petty Officer Lou Fisher. "They're anxious, excited, they don't know what to expect next," Fisher said. "I get their attention."

Fisher has lots of experience at giving this speech. He greets busloads of recruits arriving every Monday at Coast Guard Training Center Cape May, N.J.

Soon-to-graduate Seaman Recruit Randy Scheidt said, "I expected it to be tough but not as tough as it turned out to be. Our Company Commander (CC) ran us

hard physically, but the toughest part was the emotional stress.

"Arriving here not knowing what to do, where to go or what to expect was probably the scariest part of all," he admitted.

In the first hours, Fisher makes sure the new recruits are medically qualified, that they are given information to orient themselves and uniforms to wear, and that all their initial paperwork is started. Then Fisher and his staff start transforming individuals into a recruit company.

Individuality becomes a memory for the next seven weeks. Short hair and identical uniforms are just part of the process. All start with clean records and a chance to "do it right" from the beginning. All they have is each other. It's a physically, mentally and emotionally painful but necessary process to make them concentrate completely on the new world of the Coast Guard.

"A lot of recruits have a rough time making the transition. It takes about a week to break all those old civilian habits, and to start using new military routines," said Chief Petty Officer Paul Lucas, the Assistant Battalion Adjutant. He supervises recruit military training and discipline.

"We teach them so much that first week that they're just overwhelmed. The emphasis of instruction is placed on teamwork.

"We tell them that 'You can't make it alone in recruit training. You're part of a team here, and you'll be part of a station that's a team or a ship that's a team.' We really push teamwork. It's shoved in their heads from the time they start training."

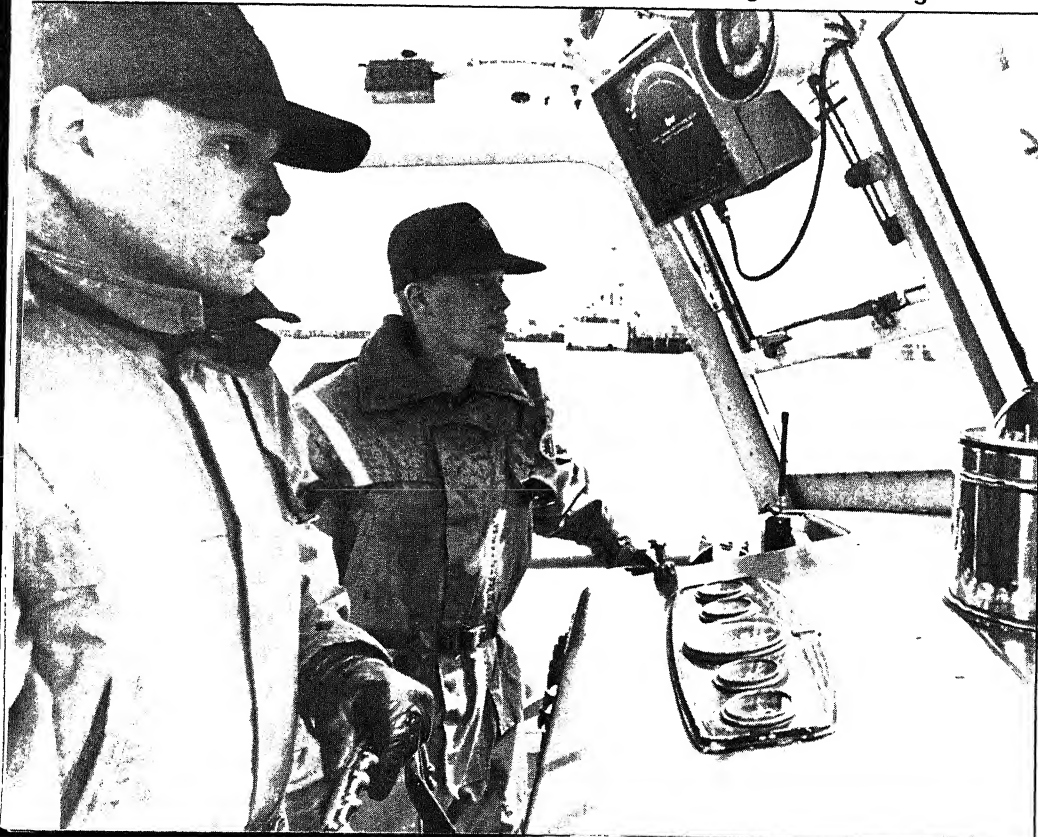
Aside from instilling teamwork, CCs are responsible for every aspect of recruit training except classroom instruction. Their areas of expertise include drill and marching; personnel, uniform, dormitory and locker inspections.

They are also responsible for teaching recruits a new language--nautical terms. Floors become decks, beds are racks, and suddenly walls are transformed into bulkheads. Doors mysteriously become hatches, kitchens are galleys and the restroom is now a head.

"CC's leave the technical and physical training to classroom instructors. We put the stress on them. That's the biggest job here, to see how they function under stressful situations. For example, we hand them a 34-page book of Coast Guard rules and regulations and tell them that they must know most of it by heart in another week.

"During the first five weeks of training the general rule is 'one screws up everybody dies.' It bonds recruits together as a company

Coast Guard recruits perform new skills on the water during basic training.





The words "seabag" and "rack" rapidly become part of the recruits' vocabulary.

when they admit to each other 'we survived,' rather than 'I survived,' Lucas said.

"When the company finally started pulling together as a team, with everybody supporting each other, that really helped to get my mind off my girlfriend, my family, and get my head into this," Scheidt said. "Then I started thinking about life after graduation, about sea or shore duty in the Coast Guard."

While many Coast Guard recruits can expect to perform shore duty for much of their careers, the backbone of the Coast Guard involves sea duty, whether on search and rescue missions or capturing lawbreakers in U.S. territorial waters.

All recruits receive basic shipboard training, using a boat mock-up and the yard full of rails, posts, pulleys and ropes at the Seabranh Technical Training Center. This allows them to become familiar with the working Coast Guard's methods and tools one at a time on

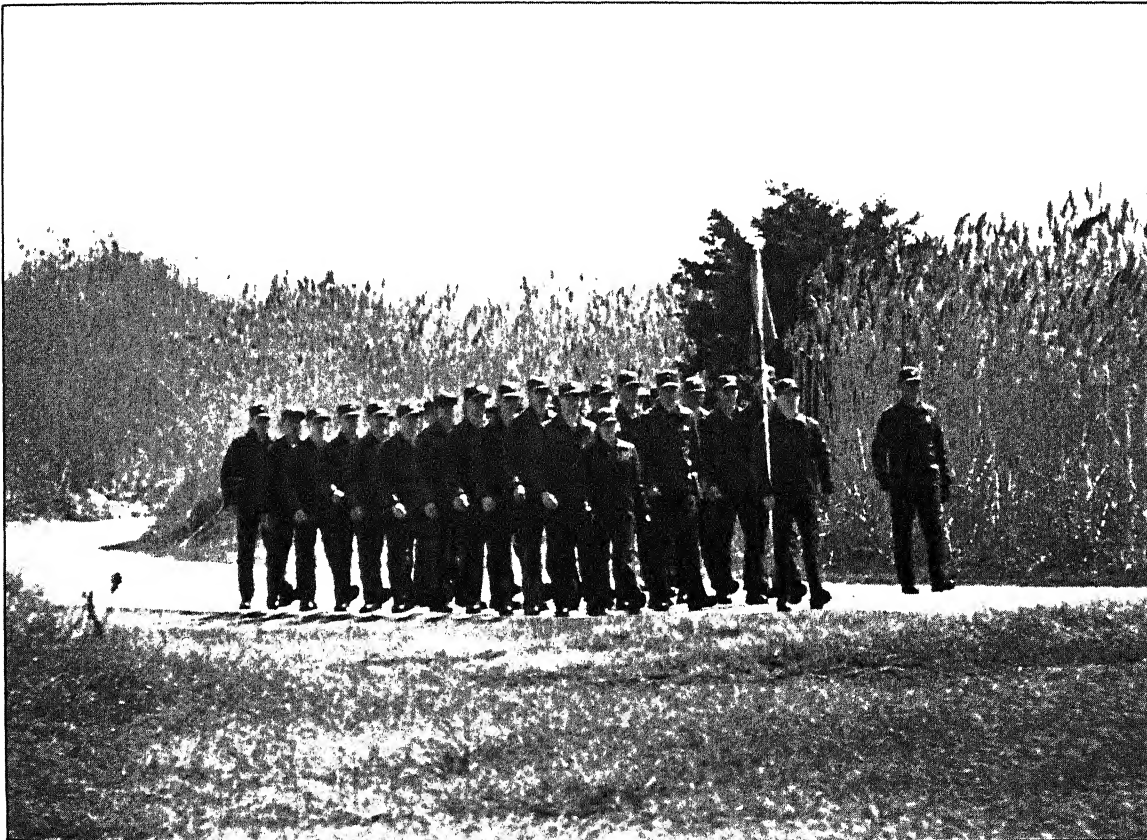
safe, solid ground instead of a rolling boat deck.

Second Class Petty Officer William Mears is a Seabranh Instructor. He said, "In the classroom we teach them the eight basic knots, deck seamanship and watchstanding, and tools, materials and maintenance. Then they have all week to practice out here where they're actually going to be tested Friday afternoon."

First Class Petty Officer Gary Banks said, "I teach shipboard watchstanding duties such as helmsman (how to steer a boat) and lookout (how to be the 'eyes' for the ship)." His classroom is the wheelhouse of the retired Coast Guard Cutter Cape Strait.

The nature of the work the Coast Guard does can put Coast Guard people into stressful situations where they deal with injured people, damaged vessels or lawbreakers on a daily basis. First aid training is just one of the extra duties taught early the first week that's part of the foundation of Coast Guard basic training.

In damage control and firefighting training, recruits learn the proper use of different types of fire



equipment for different types of fires, and how to extinguish a fire using prescribed safety procedures. Damage control training comes together in team competition, with recruits forming firehose handling teams that each rig firehoses and

put out a fire safely for a best time.

Seamanship applies to most Coast Guard missions, including law enforcement operations, and recruits are likely to become crew members of patrol units. Along with seamanship, they must

become familiar with Coast Guard weapons.

Chief Petty Officer George Robbins' clear, distinct voice carries easily, even over the rifle and pistol reports at the recruit weapons training range. "We get new recruits every week who think they're 'trained killers' before coming in. Maybe they can handle a hunting rifle, but our weapons are different.

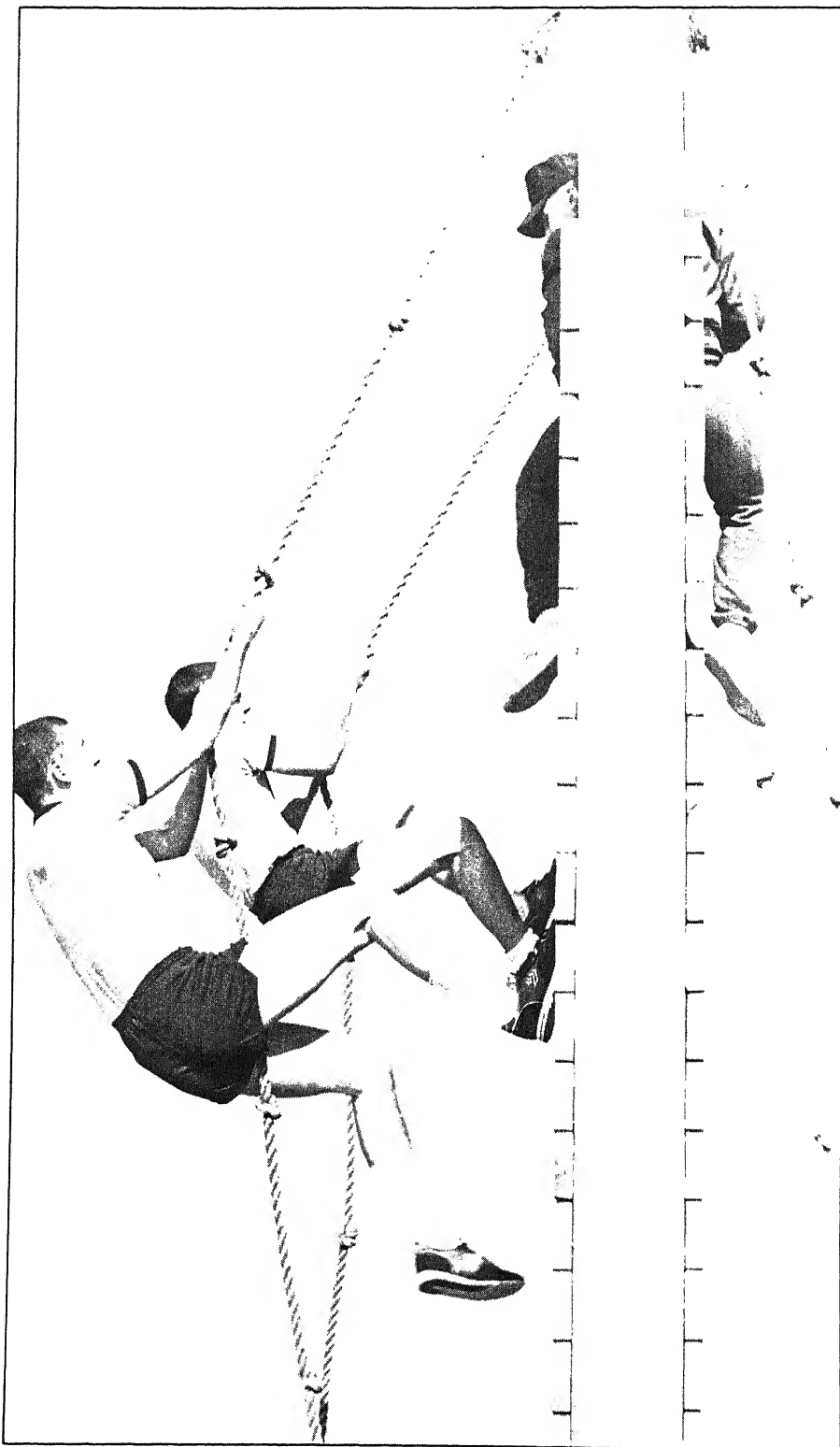
"We teach them how load, aim and fire M-16s, 9mm and .45 caliber automatic pistols. If they listen to their coaches, nine times out of 10 that first shot will be dead center in the bulls-eye," he added.

While there are many Coast Guard-specific parts of basic training, there are some universal subjects like physical fitness and water survival training that are needed by all members who serve at sea. Chief Petty Officer Glenn Heathcote supervises those areas of training. He said, "Our swimming and physical fitness standards are high. There are some who don't swim well when they arrive, but they learn. In the Coast Guard, your life can depend on your ability to swim.

"If you're hanging on a man-line (knotted ropes the crew holds on to as the boat is lowered), and the boat falls out from under you, you have to be able to climb back aboard. You might have to pick up heavy fire or rescue equipment and move it down a pier or deck to a fire or to a boat in distress. Others' lives can depend on your ability to do that," he added.

Captain M.K. Cain, Commanding Officer of the Training Center, said, "People joining the Coast Guard are more interested in our lifesaving mission than any other feature. Our law enforcement mission is a close second. That's a strong match with the organizational goals of the Coast Guard."

"It's an unwritten statement," Chief Lucas concluded, "that when we graduate recruits, we're telling them that we'd be more than proud to stand up next to them, serve with them, work with them side by side. That seems like a good thing." ◊



Recruits test their strength and stamina on the rope climb.

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Basic Training Issue

People acting together as a group can accomplish things which no individual acting alone could ever hope to bring about.

Franklin D. Roosevelt

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